

CERVICAL SCREENING

A SIMPLE TEST THAT
COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE

The Cervical Screening Test looks for HPV, the virus which can cause cervical cancer.

If you have a cervix, are between 25 and 74 and have ever been sexually active you should get tested.

Even if you have not been sexually active recently, or have been in a long term monogamous relationship, HPV can be dormant and become active again so testing is still important.

This includes women who are same sex attracted and people who identify as transgender.

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OPENING HOURS

Please contact our reception staff on 02 6247 3077 or visit shfpact.org.au for SHFPACT clinic hours

LOCATION

SHFPACT is conveniently located in the city.

Level 1,
28 University Avenue
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CONTACT

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ENGAGE

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All donations to SHFPACT over \$2.00 are tax deductible

SHFPACT CLINICAL SERVICES

- Contraceptive advice, information and services
- IUDs and other long acting contraceptive options
- Cervical screening
- Canberra Menopause Centre
- Unplanned Pregnancy Counselling Service
- Sexually transmissible infections (STIs): testing, treatment and advice
- Blood borne virus and HIV testing
- Emergency contraception (the 'Morning After' Pill)
- Breast checks and breast awareness education
- Fertility issues and pre-conception advice
- Sexual difficulties and sexuality education
- PrEP information, advice, and prescriptions

SHFPACT is a health promotion charity (HPC) assisted with funding from the ACT Government.



Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT
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Call 02 6247 3077 • SMS 0400 770 999
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shfpact.org.au

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I'M ALL ABOUT
**BACTERIAL
VAGINOSIS**



WHAT IS BACTERIAL VAGINOSIS?

Bacterial vaginosis (BV) is the commonest cause of abnormal vaginal discharge. It is caused by a change in the number and type of bacteria found in the vagina. A healthy vagina contains many different types of bacteria. In BV there is a decrease in the number of a particular bacteria called lactobacilli, and an increase in other bacteria called anaerobic bacteria. The increase in the anaerobic bacteria changes the chemistry of the vaginal fluid making it more alkaline.

One in ten will have BV at some time in their life. BV is associated with sex but is not considered a sexually transmissible infection. Having a new sexual partner or multiple partners, and douching (rinsing inside the vagina) all increase the risk of getting BV.

SYMPTOMS

50% of people with bacterial vaginosis will have no symptoms. If symptoms do occur they include:

- Increased or changed vaginal discharge. (often white or grey watery)
- Vaginal odour - usually slightly offensive or 'fishy'. The odour maybe more noticeable after sex.
- Itching or mild vulval irritation.

DIAGNOSIS

BV is usually diagnosed by a doctor based on symptoms and an examination, and is usually confirmed with a vaginal swab.

IS BACTERIAL VAGINOSIS SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED?

BV is not considered a sexually transmissible infection as there is not a known link with sexual transmission. However there does seem to be some association with it occurring when there is a new sexual partner, or when there are multiple sexual partners. There seems to be a decrease in occurrence when condoms are used consistently.

TREATMENT

In up to one third of cases BV resolves without treatment. Treatment is advised to relieve symptoms which persist, if you are planning to have a gynaecological procedure, or if you are pregnant.

BV is treated with antibiotics. These antibiotics reduce the anaerobic bacteria and allow the lactobacilli increase in number and to restore normal balance in the vagina. Antibiotics can be given as oral tablets, vaginal creams, or vaginal gels. Please discuss with your doctor your preferred method.

Some individuals may experience side effects such as abdominal pain, cramps, nausea & vomiting, flushing, or headache when taking treatment for bacterial vaginosis. Depending on which medication is used, you may be advised to avoid alcohol during treatment, and for up to 3 days afterwards.

The vaginal preparations weaken latex condoms so no sex or non-latex condom use is advised during treatment.

CONSEQUENCES OF UNTREATED INFECTION

- Someone who has BV whilst pregnant is at risk of late miscarriage, premature birth, and developing a womb infection after birth.
- Someone with BV who undergoes gynaecological procedures is at greater risk of developing a pelvic infection.
- Someone with BV has an increased risk of getting a sexually transmitted infection including HIV, chlamydia, and herpes.

REDUCING RECURRENCES

About a third who respond to treatment will have another episode of BV within three months, more than half will have a recurrence within a year.

The best ways of preventing BV are not known. Avoiding anything that changes the balance of vaginal bacteria may help. You may reduce the chance of getting BV if you avoid the following:

- Scented soap, shower gels, perfumed bubble bath, and antiseptic bath liquids.
- Vaginal douching.
- Using any commercial 'feminine hygiene' products such as sprays, vaginal deodorants, washes or wipes.

Using condoms also reduces your risk of developing BV.

References:

Australian STI Management Guidelines for use in primary care. sti.guidelines.org.au/sexually-transmissible-infections/infections-associated-with-sex/bacterial-vaginosis
Melbourne Sexual Health Centre. mshc.org.au/SexualHealthInformation/SexualHealthFactSheets/BACTERIALVAGINOSIS#WyBsoqcz70

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WE ARE MAKING OUR SERVICES MORE AFFORDABLE FOR EVERYONE



WHAT DO YOU GET AS A MEMBER?

- Special members discount rates for consultations at SHFPACT clinic and Canberra Menopause Centre.
- 5% discount on bookshop purchases.
- Free or discounted attendance at health information and special events. For example: Healthy Menopause Information Evenings by the Canberra Menopause Centre, Parent Information Evenings about communicating with your children and young people about puberty, relationships, etc.
- SHFPACT members enews that will keep you updated with special members events, activities and other services.

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shfpact.org.au
OR AT RECEPTION

